1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

Lau Islands, Fiji

By

A. M. Hocart

INTRODUCTION

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

This book is the outcome of a sojourn of four years in the Fiji Islands. Most of the time was spent in Lakemba, the chief island of Lau, as headmaster of a native school; the remainder, in exploring the whole group, with the generous assistance of Exeter College and Jesus College, Oxford.

I made it my aim to record verbatim all the information I acquired from the natives, using a kind of telegraphic Fijian, mixed with English when only the meaning and not the exact word was caught. This was a most difficult task for one who had only recently acquired a knowledge of the language. It has been necessary, of course, to condense some of this desultory conversation, but on the whole, the book represents the stringing together of native accounts regarding customs and traditions, and descriptions of what I have seen. The original manuscript, however, is preserved by me.

I must express my indebtedness to the Director of Bernice P. Bishop Museum and to his assistants, who in order to render the work intelligible to those unfamiliar with Fijian idioms, have done much arduous work which I could hardly have found the time to do.

By the Lauans, history is strictly distinguished from tales. Tales begin with the announcement *tukuni*—and proceed with *tikotiko* (there was). The narrator aims at making his tale interesting and amusing. History, known as "stories of ancient days," is told informally, but with great care for accuracy. Small inaccuracies are severely criticized behind a man's back.

The Lands Enquiry introduced an unfortunate bias into early history, various parties trying to make out that they had once ruled the land or had reduced the former rulers to complète subjection. Controversies are rendered easy by the fact that history is not remembered as one consecutive story; to Fijians, it consists of detached episodes that strike the imagination. From Niumataiwalu (p. 241) on it is possible to place many of

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

Southern Lau, Fiji : an Ethnography

By **LAURA THOMPSON**
BISHOP MUSEUM FELLOW; 1933-34.

INTRODUCTION

SCOPE AND METHOD

This monograph is based on field work in ethnography in the Fiji islands, from August 1933 to April 1934, made possible by a Bishop Museum fellowship. The main problem has been to understand and describe the native culture of the southern islands of the Lau or Eastern Archipelago of Fiji not only as it is functioning today but also in its historical setting.

The Lau islands, located on the border of Melanesia and Polynesia (fig. 1, insert), have long been subjected to a diversity of cultural influences from adjacent culture areas. Even within the last century, exotic traits from neighboring islands, especially Tonga, have altered the native pattern (pp. 29, 215). Before the advent of western civilization Lau presented the complicated picture of a changing marginal culture which lacked integration. Moreover much of the apparent unity in the configuration in native culture was due to geographic proximity rather than to the inner necessity and slow growth which characterizes true integration. In the last hundred years the interplay of European and Tongan influences has further disintegrated the old native culture. These have affected not only the superficial aspects of life, such as technology, but its deeper phases, such as the social organization and religion.

The complicated history and lack of integration of the Lauan culture presented problems to the ethnologist attempting to study the old life. In order to recover as much of the native culture as possible, I limited the investigation to a group of six islands in southern Lau where western influence had been relatively weak because of their isolation in the Fiji group and lack of commercially valuable natural resources. No Europeans live or own land on these islands which have no communication with the outside world except an occasional government or trade cutter. First, seeking to gain an intimate knowledge of the daily life of a specific group, I spent five months making an intensive investigation of the village of Tokalau on Kambara. Tokalau with 125 inhabitants is the highest ranking village on Kambara, the largest island in southern Lau. Kambara had a population of 446 natives living in four villages. The island was small enough to allow personal contact with each individual and large enough to provide a choice of good informants. After I had gained an understanding of the culture on Kambara I spent the

[Text continues on p. 5.-
Analyst]

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remainder of the time surveying the culture on the islands of Fulanga, Ongea, Mothe, Namuka, and Wangava in order to check and gain prospective on the detailed picture and to secure a larger choice of informants. Altogether I studied 11 villages with a total population of over 1,500 natives.

The greatest difficulties in the work were encountered in attempting to recover the old religion after almost a century of mission influence and to analyze the intricacies of the social system after sixty years of British rule. Most of the old religion has been lost. The fragmentary account here presented (pp. 105-119) has been recorded as it was obtained from aged informants, especially Moto and Tchosaia of Kambara, Kalo of Fulanga, and Mosesi of Namuka. Much of it has been taken from the notes of Bernhard Tueting. It may be colored by the teachings of the missionaries.

Changes due to interisland warfare, to Tongan contacts, and to European influence have obscured or changed important aspects of the social organization, especially the phratry division, the local unity of clans, the ranks and functions of clan titles, and native social values in general. To gain a picture of the system as a whole it was necessary to make a detailed analysis of the social organization of the 11 villages studied. The analysis as here presented (pp. 31-103) is based on the genealogies of 37 clans recorded in the field, sketch maps of each village, property rights, clan gods and their incarnations, legends, ceremonies and the statements of reliable native informants. The data have been checked by an examination of archaeological sites such as hamlets, fortresses, and sacred places (pp. 216-223).

As will be seen in the following pages, a knowledge of the Lauan social system, based as it is on the native concept of mana expressed in social prestige, is vital to an understanding of the culture as a whole. Moreover, the evidence from which the system has been reconstructed is rapidly disappearing. Hence time was devoted to its study at the expense of the study of other phases of life—such as technology, social ceremonial, and games—which it is hoped may still be studied in the future. In such studies of material culture as were recorded an attempt was made to emphasize functional rather than technological aspects. The development of the individual, social sanctions and law, native medicine and changes due to the introduction of western civilization have been described in a special study of culture change and colonial administration in Lau (23)[1] and hence have not been included in this monograph.

This study is an attempt to record the most important aspects of the native culture of Lau as a whole before they disappear. It is necessarily incomplete. The aim has been to describe the culture of southern Lau as revealed by field research on the six islands visited in its geographic setting and, as far

[1] Numbers in parentheses refer to Literature Cited, p. 224.

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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WESTERN AND TONGAN INFLUENCES

Although the Fiji Islands were discovered by the Dutch navigator, Tasman, in 1643, little is known about the history of the group before the beginning of the nineteenth century. Early historical records on the Lau Islands are particularly scarce and fragmentary. They consist of accounts by early voyagers, such as Cook in 1774, Bligh in 1789 and 1792, Wilson in 1797, and Bellingshausen in 1820, which are quoted by Henderson (11) in his careful study of the discoverers of the Fiji Islands.

There is also an excellent account of Fijian culture by Williams (27, vol. 1), the missionary, who spent several years on the island of Lakemba.

The most valuable recent record is the account of Lau Island culture of 20 years ago by Hocart (15), who spent four years as a teacher on the island of Lakemba. Hocart visited the southern Lau Islands, but the bulk of his observations concern the more sophisticated native life on Lakemba, the residence of the high chief of Lau.

In the last century Lauan culture has been altered considerably by influences from outside the Fiji group, especially from Europe and Tonga. The history of the group and recent changes in the culture have been treated separately (22, 23). A summary of the history follows:

In the early nineteenth century European traders were beginning to visit the main islands of the Fiji group, chiefly to collect sandalwood and bêche-de-mer. At this time there were a number of hostile, independent chiefdoms like Lakemba in Fiji. The most powerful among them were Mbau and Rewa in southeastern Viti Levu and Somosomo, Mathuata and Mbua in east, north and west Vanua Levu respectively. Perhaps the most far-reaching effect of early contact with western civilization was the introduction of firearms and western military tactics to Fiji. This intensified the struggle between the leading chiefdoms and led to the centralization of political power. It led to the use of larger forces and to an increase in the extent of cannibalism and human sacrifice. Thus in the first half of the century it was possible for the chiefdom of Mbau in east Viti Levu to become dominant in the Fiji group.

The centralization of power had another important result. It prepared the way for the penetration of the Tongans. Contact of Tonga with the Fiji Islands began in the prehistoric period. Probably the Tongans, who were fearless navigators, discovered Lau accidentally when their large, double canoes were blown by the southeast trade winds to the group. Gradually economic exchange grew up between Tonga and Fiji. It was initiated and carried on by the Tongans, mainly because of the hardwood found in southern Lau and absent in Tonga. They visited the southern islands in order to build large double canoes, far superior to their own, which were fitted together with planks. They also obtained red paroquet (parakeet) feathers (which they exchanged with Samoa to be used in decorating fine mats) from Taveuni and sandalwood from Mbua. They gave Tongan articles such as whales' teeth, barkcloth, and inlaid clubs in return. They also paid in services such as the loan of women and help in warfare. Since the art of warfare was more highly developed in Fiji than in Tonga, young Tongan noblemen often spent a few years in the service of Lauan or Fijian chiefs. In return for their services in warfare, Tongan warriors were occasionally given land; and gradually colonies of Tongans grew up in Lau, Vanua Levu, and the islands of the Koro Sea.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the Tongans in Fiji had grown unruly, and as a result of many complaints against them, King George of Tonga sent the Tongan

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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the time when these studies can be of value to the administrator, the educator, and the medical practitioner. Using the results of field research, I have made the following study in the hope that it may be of practical value in helping to cope with some of the problems brought about by the expansion of western civilization. 121

Although the change taking place on Kambara in many ways is unique, it is one example of the adjustment of preliterate people, that is people without a written tradition, to western culture throughout the world. Although the results of a study of what is happening in one small area may not be applied uncritically to another, they should throw light on the general problem of how culture changes and can be changed. Moreover, the comparison of a number of detailed studies of specific groups of people should lead to a clearer understanding of the processes set in motion by the expansion of western civilization and of the problems of scientific administration.

The material on which this study is based was gathered during nine months of ethnological field work in the Fiji islands in 1933-34, and the data presented in this study apply to this date unless otherwise specified. While in Fiji I learned to know the natives of the eastern islands, their language and their culture by actually living among them in their villages and participating in their daily life. From my headquarters in Tokalau village on Kambara I studied the people of the island and made trips by native canoe, since no other transportation was available, to the neighboring islands of Wangava, Namuka-i-Lau, Mothe, Fulanga, and Ongea. These trips, which varied from 3 to 40 miles each on the open sea, were made in native outrigger canoes with crab claw sails of mat. Whether we skimmed in a stiff gale over the deep sea swells, lay becalmed under the scorching sun, or strained our eyes through the darkening night to hold our course to the faint low silhouette of an island, these canoe voyages were one of the highlights of my sojourn in Lau. 114 123

4: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1938 OQ6 Lau OQ6

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THE CULTURE HISTORY OF THE LAU ISLANDS, FIJI[1]

By LAURA THOMPSON

THE Lau Islands form the eastern border of Fiji. Lakemba in the center of the Lau group was formerly an independent chiefdom, holding all the central and southern islands in tributary relationship. The southern islands, partly of volcanic formation,[2] partly of coral limestone,[3] comprised the chiefdom's rich hinterland. Most of them lack garden land but they produce raw materials used in making important articles of exchange. Outstanding are the hardwoods[4] used for large sailing canoes. Southern Lau supplied all Fiji and also Tonga with these vessels. The type of paper mulberry[5] used for the best barkcloth and pandanus[6] used for the finest mats are also found here, and coconut of excellent quality for oil grows on all the southern islands. Based on these resources, specialized crafts have developed on the islands, which produce the finest canoes, barkcloth, and mats in Fiji. These commodities were traded with Tonga and also collected regularly as tribute to the high chief of Lakemba, who distributed part of them to other chiefdoms in Fiji through a system of gift exchange.

Although of great importance in native economy, the southern islands have offered little to attract the white man on account of their lack of fertile soil

[1] The following study is a translation of a lecture delivered to the Ethnological Colloquium of the University of Berlin in March, 1937. In its original form this has appeared in Archiv für Anthropologie, Vol. 24, No. 2, 1937. It is part of the results of nine months field work in Fiji under a Yale University-Bishop Museum fellowship. A description of the ethnographic results of the field trip are being published as a Bishop Museum bulletin. The spelling of native words follows David Hazelwood, *A Feejeean and English Dictionary* (Vewa, Fiji, 1850). Place names follow British Admiralty charts.

I express sincere appreciation to Bernhard J. Tüting for assistance in the field and particularly for his work on the native religion.

[2] Mothe and Komo Islands.

[3] Kambara (which has a volcanic outcrop), Namuka, Oneate, Fulanga, and Ongea Islands. (Also Ono and Vatoa, the southernmost islands, which are not included in this study.)

[4] Especially vesi, called greenheart of India (*Intsia bijuga* [Colebr.] Ktze.), also mbau (probably *Pittosporum* Brackenridge).

[5] Masi, masi ntchina, and ndrauthoka, forms of the paper mulberry (*Broussonetia papyrifera* Vent.). The paper mulberry is found on every island but the best quality grows only on Namuka.

[6] On Fulanga, Ongea, and Wangava.

[pp 1-151 not processed]

6: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1947 OQ6 Lau OQ6

THE PROBLEM OF "TOTEMISM" IN SOUTHERN LAU

A Reply to A. Capell and R. H. Lester

By Laura Thompson

114 AFTER having spent several years on the historical analysis of the intricate social system of southern Lau, presented in *Southern Lau, Fiji, An Ethnography*,[1] I was interested to find several of my basic findings under attack by A. Capell and R. H. Lester in the pages of this journal.[2] Curiously enough an examination of each point mentioned by my critics revealed that my findings, far from being at variance with their own general conclusions, actually substantiated them.

Capell and Lester admit the similarity in general conclusions between my work and their own.[3] Indeed, they state that but for one or two points for which "no evidence has been collected elsewhere," I "might well have been summarizing their paper."[4] And my critics add that their own study "was actually drafted in full before the authors saw *Southern Lau*."[5] Apparently they also did not read my two earlier articles presenting the same conclusions, that is, "Kulturgeschichte der Lauinseln (Fidschigruppe),"[6] and "The Culture History of the Lau Islands, Fiji,"[7] although the latter is listed in the bibliography of *Southern Lau*.

Capell and Lester's documentation of my conclusions regarding the culture history of Fiji has in itself theoretical significance which they do not mention in their paper but which should be noted for their bearing on the development of ethnological method. The fact that two independent investigations of an intricate problem in historical reconstruction—(1) an earlier one using the method of historical reconstruction through internal evidence intensively on a small marginal area in the extreme south-eastern part of the Fiji group, and (2) a later one based primarily on the findings of the Native Land Commission[8] and on linguistic data and working from west Fiji across the whole group but omitting the extreme south-east—have arrived at almost identical conclusions (so much so that those of the earlier work are

[1] Bishop Museum Bulletin 162, 1940.

[2] "Local Divisions and Movements in Fiji," *Oceania*, Vols. XI, XII, 1941. Due to war conditions these volumes did not reach Washington until 1946.

[3] *Op. cit.*, Vol. XII, p. 45.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 46.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 46.

[6] *Archiv. für Anthropologie*, Vol. XXIV, No. 2, pp. 140-53, 1937.

[7] *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XL, No. 2, pp. 181-97, 1938.

[8] It is important to note that the writer's field work in Lau was done before the southern islands were surveyed by the Native Land Commission.

[p. 211] [pp 1-210 not processed]

6: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1947 OQ6 Lau OQ6

114 quoted as conclusions for the later)[9] has important theoretical implications. It documents the inference that the method of historical reconstruction through the use of internal evidence, critically applied to a small, judiciously selected area (that is, five islands of southern Lau), may yield valid generalizations for a much larger area (that is, the Fiji Islands as a whole). Examples of independent verification of hypotheses growing out of such intensive, localized studies take on added significance when the possibilities of extending this same method for purposes of extrapolation and prediction are considered.

It would indeed be strange if verifiable general conclusions on such a complicated problem as the culture history of Fiji could be reached on the basis of careless field work or faulty analysis. Yet that is the criticism which Capell and Lester make of *Southern Lau*, both by direct statement and by innuendo. After taking me to task on my findings regarding totemism, they state: "In a number of other points noted . . . Laura Thompson's work is at variance with the findings of the N.L.C. [Native Land Commission] on such *easily ascertainable matters* [italics mine] as groupings of *yavusa*, *matanggali*, etc., but as this paper is not a critique of her book the notes need not be given in full here. The only point is that *inaccuracy* [italics mine] in such matters suggests that more difficult inquiries may have *gone astray* [italics mine] also."[10]

To a professional anthropologist this is serious criticism couched in strong language. And since it appears in a reputable professional journal, it necessitates a reply. But due to the complicated nature of the problem under consideration, to answer such inclusive and in large part undocumented criticism, it will be necessary to discuss each major point mentioned by my critics in relation to my general conclusions. However, the discussion has its advantages since, besides clarifying the record, it helps to define more precisely some of the problems awaiting investigation in the Fijian area and reveals (1) certain kinds of inaccuracies which students working in the Fiji area should guard against in using the reports of the Native Land Commission; (2) certain pitfalls into which they may fall as a result of preoccupation with words and formulas rather than meanings, relationships, and background phenomena in general; and (3) the fact that looseness of thinking and even of expression may underlie the quibbling over words and formulas in which scientists occasionally indulge.

Evaluation of Field Data Presented in Southern Lau

Before considering detailed points, however, it should be noted that, after almost a century of mission influence and sixty years of British rule, the indigenous social system and especially the old region of southern Lau presented the most challenging and difficult problem encountered by the ethnologist in the field. This is stated

[9] *Op. cit.*, Vol. XII, pp. 45-46.

[10] *Op. cit.*, Vol. XII, footnote 34, p. 29.

6: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1947 OQ6 Lau OQ6

clearly in the introduction to *Southern Lau*.[11] Most of the old religion has been lost. The fragmentary account presented in *Southern Lau*[12] was obtained thirteen years ago, mainly from aged informants. It is unlikely that any one of these informants is still living and with them will have perished the main reservoirs of knowledge concerning the most esoteric aspects of the culture. But aside from matters of religion, to state casually that matters such as social groupings are " easily ascertainable " reveals a superficial knowledge of the area, an inference regarding my critics which is amply borne out by a critical appraisal of certain other statements they make regarding southern Lau, as will presently be demonstrated.

Actually, to get a clear picture of the functioning social system of the area it was necessary to make a detailed historical analysis of the social organization in each of the eleven villages on the five inhabited islands surveyed. By a detailed analysis I mean, for example, that genealogies for the 1,500 inhabitants of the five islands were recorded in the field, each as far back as the memory of the natives extended, namely from four to twelve generations, a formidable task in itself. Sketch maps were made of each village and whenever possible kinship groups revealed by the genealogies were related exactly to their localities of residence in each village. This analysis revealed the main social groups, including the thirty-seven clans existent at the time of the field work together with the historical development and rank of each. Patterns regarding marriage, residence, descent and succession were worked out by counting each individual case from four to twelve generations back, and variations on the patterns thus established were calculated on a numerically exact percentage basis. Thus my description of the social system of southern Lau is based, not on a formula worked out by means of research in adjacent areas, nor on generalizations from selected cases, nor on the statements of a few informants, but on *exact numerical calculations* which included every one of the 1,500 residents of the five islands and their genealogies recorded as far back as the memory of the living extended.[13]

The method which I employed in analysing the social system of southern Lau will be recognized as an extension of the genealogical method developed by W. H. R. Rivers[14] in recording the social structure of Melanesia. It is difficult to imagine how a more numerically exact empirical method could be found to analyse an Oceanian social system nor how such an analysis, if systematically carried out, could go " far astray " on the major social groups (both kinship and geographical) and their interrelationships. I therefore submit that there is a high degree of probability that the functioning social system including the major social groups in historical perspective described in *Southern Lau* is correct.

[11] P. 5.

[12] Pp. 105-19.

[13] With the exception of the abstract of the chief's phratry (*Southern Lau*, Table 2) and the village plan of Tokalau (*Southern Lau*, Fig. 3 and Table 1), the genealogies and village plans recorded in the field were not included in *Southern Lau*, due to lack of space, but they are available in manuscript form.

[14] *The History of Melanesian Society*, Cambridge, 1914.

6: Thompson E-5 (1933-1984) 1947 OQ6 Lau OQ6

114 Capell and Lester state that they have omitted most of the data from this area in their study of Fiji as a whole " largely because the older beliefs and practices have been so overlaid by modern ideas . . . that certainty is difficult to reach."[15] It is interesting to note, however, that the only material from southern Lau they do attempt to treat at length, namely that on totemism, is unquestionably the least reliable because practically all of the old religion has been lost.

It is important to emphasize also that, whereas we can be fairly sure of the social system in the area, there is some disagreement regarding the *native terminology* used to designate the various functioning social groups. And since Capell and Lester's investigations are based to a considerable extent on linguistic analysis, rather than on painstaking systematic study of functioning structures and their historical interrelationships, it is easy to see how their preoccupation with words (for example, *yavusa*, *matanggali* and *itokatoka*) and with *a priori* formal definitions have apparently blinded them to the all-important functioning groups to which the words are actually applied by the natives themselves in the context of the local culture.

This point is well illustrated by Capell and Lester's treatment of the problem of totemism in southern Lau.[16] Their loose, uncritical use of the term " totemism " which they do not define, apparently closes their eyes to the occurrence of " totemic " phenomena not specifically labelled as such, as will be shown. In *Southern Lau* I purposely limited the use of the term " totemism " to true totemism (including a belief in descent from the totem) as defined and accepted by most anthropologists. I avoided the use of the term in describing " totemic " phenomena which did not include such belief. Actually, I found traces of what appears to be two " totemic " systems in southern Lau : (1) true totems among the land people,[17] and (2) a trilogy of linked " totems " among the " Nakauvandra people."[18] These will be discussed in due course. But because I did not label the latter " totemism " it was overlooked by my critics who went so far as to state that in *Southern Lau* " . . . there is no mention of the trilogy of totems that would be expected in an area whose civilization is based on that of the Nakauvandra people."[19]

Incidentally, the latter statement contains still another factual misrepresentation. A careful analysis of all the available data shows that the civilization of southern Lau is based not on " that of the Nakauvandra people " but rather on a blend of three cultures, namely that of the land people, the " Nakauvandra people " and the

[15] Capell and Lester, *op. cit.*, Vol. XII, p. 33.

[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 27-29.

[17] Described in *Southern Lau* on pp. 105-106.

[18] Described in *Southern Lau* on pp. 109-111. In this paper I use the term " Nakauvandra people " to refer to the members of clans which trace descent from Ndaunisai, in order to conform with Capell and Lester's terminology.

[19] Capell and Lester, *op. cit.*, Vol. XII, p. 28. Actually in an earlier article I do use the word to describe the trilogy of linked " totems " associated in southern Lau with clans. See " Culture History of the Southern Lau Islands," *op. cit.*, p. 186.

6: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1947 OQ6 Lau OQ6

Tongans.[20] Moreover, as noted in *Southern Lau*,[21] more than 80% of the inhabitants are affiliated not with the "Nakauvandra people" but the earlier land people. (See pp. 8 ff.) In this connection one wonders why, if Capell and Lester are so sure that "certainty is difficult to reach" regarding the problems of southern Lau, they make a categorical statement regarding the basis of Lauan civilization without documentation. In this connection we should also note that, according to population estimates, the "Nakauvandra people" did not by any means overrun southern Lau, as maintained by Capell and Lester.[22]

Let us turn now to some of the findings in *Southern Lau* to which my critics take explicit exception. "Totemic" phenomena, on which Capell and Lester centre their concern in southern Lau, cannot be understood except in the context of the functioning social system as a whole. Although this is fully treated in *Southern Lau*, for purposes of the discussion it will be necessary to include a brief outline of it here.

The Functioning Social System of Southern Lau

The most obvious social unit in southern Lau is the village (called *koro*). The villages are united into larger political divisions of minor chiefdoms (formerly called *mata ni tu*) which stand in tributary relationship to the high chief at Lakemba. Moreover, each village is composed of three or more clans (called *matanggali*), that is, unilateral kinship groups which as a rule are exogamous, patrilineal and patrilocal. Before the abolition of warfare in Lau the clans occupied hamlets (called *itokatoka*) in garden lands or clearing in the bush. Thereafter they moved to the coast and united in villages but many clans still retained their local unity in the village. Hence the clans are really clan-hamlets, that is, both kinship and geographic units. The clans are divided into sub-clans (usually called *mbatchi ni lovo*, although the senior sub-clans may be called *itokatoka*). The sub-clans are subdivided into families or households (called *vuvale*).

The clans may also be classified into larger kinship divisions which I have called phratries (*yavusa*). There were five such groups of clans on the five islands surveyed, that is, two major groups, namely (1) the clans of the land people (*kai vanua*) and (2) the clans of the "Nakauvandra people"; and three minor groups, namely (1) the clans of the chief's carpenters (*matai sau*), (2) those of the *lameki* carpenters (*matai lemaki*), and (3) those of the sea people (*kai wai*). From an analysis of all the available data, including the genealogies of the thirty-seven clans existent in 1933-34, it appears that these five phratries stem from historic migrations to the islands.

Inasmuch as the evidence concerning the "Nakauvandra" group of clans is the most clear cut, I shall discuss it first, although to this phratry only five clans (representing less than 20% of the population of southern Lau) may be definitely assigned.

[20] *Southern Lau*, pp. 212 ff.

[21] *Southern Lau*, p. 32.

[22] Capell and Lester, *op. cit.*, Vol. XII, p. 38.

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6: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1947 OQ6 Lau OQ6

614 name of Tokalau village.[37] For Fulanga are listed as *yavusa* (1) Muanaira, the name of one of the three existent Fulanga villages; (2) Naivindamu, the name of another of the villages; and (3) Ongea, the name by which Naithulaianga village on Ongea island is known. Omitted from the Fulanga list, according to Capell and Lester, is Fulanga *yavusa*, which accounts for the third village of the island, namely Muanaithake. The only *yavusa* on Mothe listed is Ndelaimakotu, the name of the archæological fortress site formerly occupied by the Mothe people.[38] Namuka island does not appear on the list.

From the above it appears that the functioning social groups to which the Native Land Commission's *yavusa* for southern Lau correspond are *village* groups, the most obvious of all the social groups in the area. This inference fits every case listed, even Mothe if, as I infer, the two historically distinct but at present contiguous villages of Mothe, namely Nasau and Korotolu, have been listed as one unit by the Native Land Commission.

[114] Let us now examine Capell's definition of a *yavusa* in the *New Fijian Dictionary*. A *yavusa*, according to this source, is "the largest kinship and social division of Fijian society, consisting of the descendants of one originator (*vu*), and recognizing one *kalou-vu* (originating spirit or god, normally the father of the *vu*), and one set of totems and war-cry."

Testing by this definition each *yavusa* listed for southern Lau by the Native Land Commission, we find that:

Nakoro (that is, Nggalinggali village), made up of two "Nakauvandra" clans (Tanggu and Naivotavota), one land clan (Nanggara) and one *matai lemaki* clan (Matai Lemaki), consists of the descendants of three originators rather than one. To wit, the two "Nakauvandra" clans trace their pedigrees back to Ndaunisai, the land clan claims a local origin near Undu, and the *matai lemaki* clan traces its pedigree back to Lemaki, a Samoan carpenter. We conclude that Nakoro does not fulfil the first condition of a *yavusa* laid down by the *New Fijian Dictionary* definition, namely that of consisting of the descendants of a common originator.

The same argument holds for Nukuleka (that is, Tokalau village), which is made up of two "Nakauvandra" clans (Vuanikathu and Vuanitavola) and one land clan (Katoka). It also holds for Ndelaimakotu if, as I surmise, the Native Land Commission's Ndelaimakotu grouping includes the two contiguous Mothe villages. Taken together these are made up of one "Nakauvandra" clan (Mbutonikoro) and five land clans (Nasau, Kamali, Vangariki, Banganduku and Nggali).

Turning to the villages made up of clans which are not affiliated with the "Nakauvandra people," we find that the Vuaningingia (that is, Undu village) group is composed entirely of land clans with the exception of the Matai Sau. The land people of Undu believe themselves descended from the aborigines of Lau but

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

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are not distinguished from the Numburavi (that is, Lomatchi) group (consisting entirely of land clans) in this respect. 614

It is interesting to note that in the Native Land Commission's list Undu and Lomatchi villages have almost identical "totems," which correspond to those recorded in *Southern Lau* for the Kambara land group except for the *manumanu*. However, the Nggalinggali group also claims the tree (*ngingia*) and the fish (shark) which, according to my informants, belonged to the land people of Kambara island.

Also Muanaira and Naivindamu, two Fulanga villages composed entirely of land clans and, according to my notes, reputed to be descended from the earliest inhabitants, do not fulfil the conditions laid down by the definition for classification as separate *yavusa*.

Ongea (that is, Naithulaianga village) is composed of two clans (Mata and Nggalileka) belonging definitely to the land group, one clan (Tawalo) which claims to be *kai wai*, and one clan (Tumbesara) which may belong to "Nakauvandra" but since its pedigree does not show direct descent to Ndaunisai cannot be definitely assigned to it. Ongea therefore definitely does not fulfil the dictionary definition requirements of a *yavusa* group.

Thus our inquiry into the nature of the groups labelled *yavusa* by the Native Land Commission reveals that not one fulfils the condition regarding belief in a common ancestor laid down by the dictionary definition.

Of the functioning social groups defined by me in *Southern Lau*, on the other hand, three of the five phratries (namely, "Nakauvandra," Matai Lemaki and Mata Sau) do fulfil the condition regarding belief in a common ancestor laid down by the definition. Moreover, all five of the clans which I have definitely assigned to the "Nakauvandra" phratry trace their pedigrees directly to their common ancestor (*vu*), namely Ndaunisai, and claim a common ancestor god (*kalou-vu*), namely Ndengei, who is reputed to be the father of the *vu*. They do not have a common set of totems, so far as my information extends, nor a common war cry. On the other hand, two of the five "Nakauvandra" clans within the phratry claim a common set of totems and a common war cry. 614 615

Of the other four phratries, the Matai Lemaki traces descent from the Samoan carpenter, Lemaki; the Matai Sau from the Matai Sau originally from Viti Levu; the *kai wai*, so far as the evidence extends, seem to stem from the *kai wai* of eastern Fiji; and the land group of each island traditionally traced its origin to some natural phenomenon on the island rather than to a common originator for all the land people.

The available evidence, therefore, leads us to infer that in southern Lau there is no over-all, area-wide social group, either based on kinship or on geography, which fulfils all of the conditions stipulated by the New Fijian Dictionary's definition of the term *yavusa*. Let us consider first the Native Land Commission data. If, as we assume from the Native Land Commission's list, each village group has a *wangga-wangga*, a tree, a fish, and a *manumanu*, then the village group fulfils one of the requirements of the definition, namely that of claiming a common set of "totems." But our analysis of the functioning social system shows that only in four of the village 114 614 615 621

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groups listed by the Native Land Commission (that is, Undu, Lomatchi, Muanaira and Naivindamu) do we find any evidence of common ancestry for all the inhabitants, and in these cases the common ancestry, being based on a traditional belief in descent from the aboriginal inhabitants of the island does not exclude the land clans from other villages on the same island.

Turning to the data presented in Southern Lau, on the other hand, we note first that the phratry groups come much nearer to fulfilling the condition of common ancestry laid down by the dictionary definition, but do not, so far as is known, have a common set of totems and a war cry. Indeed the land people are characterized as definitely unwarlike. Secondly, we note that two clans of the "Nakauvandra" phratry seem to fulfil all the conditions of the definition and it is possible that the other three "Nakauvandra" clans did so at one time. However, the remaining thirty-two clans in the area studied, as far as is known, do not fulfil these conditions.

The absence of a clear-cut *yavusa* division in the functioning social system of southern Lau, revealed by our analysis, explains both the confusion of the natives regarding the meaning of the word *yavusa* in terms of actual living social groups (especially the discrepancy between informants belonging to the "Nakauvandra" group and to the land group), and it explains the discrepancy between the use of the term by the Native Land Commission and by the writer. The Native Land Commission associates it with village groups (that is, groups of clans related by common residence) whereas I associate it with phratries (that is, groups of clans related by common ancestry). The *yavusa* of the Native Land Commission is a social group based on geography; that of the writer is a social group based on traditional belief in common descent from a human or mythical ancestor. Since, however, common ancestry is the key notion stressed in a literal translation of the word *yavusa*[39] as well as in Capell's definition, I conclude that there is more justification for my use of the term than for that of the Native Land Commission. Indeed it appears from the above analysis that the Native Land Commission has attempted to superimpose a previously developed formula on to the social system of southern Lau regardless of the social groups actually functioning there. And this in turn explains why Capell and Lester claim that groupings of *yavusa* in southern Lau are "easily ascertainable," a fallacy of which has been revealed by our analysis of the problem on the basis of the actual living structures.

On the basis of the above analysis, I submit that of all the social groups functioning in southern Lau, the term *yavusa* fits the phratry best. However, on account of the confusion regarding the term, it may be advisable to eliminate it altogether in describing the social system of this area.

The confusion as to the meaning of the word *yavusa* in terms of the actual social groups found in southern Lau is understandable on the basis of either one of two hypotheses, both of which fit into the general conclusions presented in *Southern Lau*

[39] "The original founder of the group is called its *vu*, or root . . . ; the group which originates from him is called a *yavusa*." (Capell and Lester, *op. cit.*, Vol. XI, p. 314.)

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regarding the culture history of the area. One explanation is that the word had different connotations among the land people and among the "Nakauvandra" people and that the confusion created by this situation has persisted down to the present. The other and more plausible explanation is that the term was introduced into southern Lau by the "Nakauvandra people" along with certain changes in the social structure. But in the blending of the two complexes, that of the land people and that of the immigrants, its original meaning was confused or lost. The latter explanation fits into Capell and Lester's hypothesis regarding the origin of the term.[40]

The Matanggali Group in Southern Lau

Since my critics also questioned my use of the term *matanggali*, a word is inserted here in regard to it. I used the term *matanggali* to designate a clan, namely a "unilateral kinship unit which is, as a rule, exogamous, patrilineal and patrilocal."[41] It is used thus by the natives and by Hocart,[42] and I submit that of all the social groups in southern Lau with the exception of the village, the *matanggali* is the most clear cut and the least open to question.

Theoretically a clan consists of the descendants of a band of brothers who occupied a hamlet site (*itokatoka*) and a few clans trace their pedigrees to the original bands. After the abolition of warfare in Lau the hamlets moved to the coast and united into villages, often retaining their local unity in the village. Hence many clans are really clan-hamlets, both kinship and geographic units. As the clan group expanded, it divided into sub-clans, the senior branch being called *itokatoka*, the junior ones *mbatchi ni iovo*, or else all the sub-clans were simply called *mbatchi ni lovo*.

Thus the *matanggali* division in southern Lau conforms to a marked degree to Capell's definition of the word in the *New Fijian Dictionary*: "Matanggali: 'the primary social division in Fiji, larger than the *itokatoka* and smaller than the *yavusa*. It appears to have sprung from the subdivisions of naturally increasing families, the sons of an original ancestor being the heads of the resulting matanggali.'"

Summary

The argument advanced in this paper may be summarized as follows:

1. There is a high degree of probability that the main outlines of the functioning social system (including the major social groups in historical perspective) described in *Southern Lau* are correct. There is some disagreement, however, regarding the native terminology used to designate the various functioning social groups.

2. An examination of the data on "totemic" phenomena described in *Southern Lau* reveals traces of what appear to be two "totemic" systems in the area, an earlier one affiliated with the land people and a later one introduced by the "Nakauvandra people."

[40] *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 314 ff.
[41] *Southern Lau*, p. 35.
[42] "Lau Islands, Fiji," *Bishop Museum Bulletin* 62, 1929, pp. 10 ff.

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114 3. There is no clear-cut division in the social system of southern Lau which corresponds to the *yavusa* group as defined by Capell in the *New Fijian Dictionary*, but the phratry seems to come nearest to it. Apparently the Native Land Commission has superimposed its own formula on the area without regard for the actual functioning social structures.

4. The clan division in the area is relatively clear-cut and conforms to a marked degree to Capell's dictionary definition of the term *matanggali*.

[174] 5. A detailed examination of the points enumerated above leads to the conclusion that considered separately and as a whole they substantiate the hypothesis first suggested by the writer in 1936 and again in 1938 and 1941 that, viewed historically, there are three basic cultural strata in Lau: an early one which is primarily Melanesian in type, a second one which is "general Polynesian" in type and affiliated with the "Nakauvandra people," and a third one which is "western Polynesian" in type and affiliated with the Tongan immigrants. The major premises of this hypothesis have now been corroborated independently by the work of Capell and Lester.

6. The findings to date suggest that on the extreme south-eastern margin of Fiji, namely in southern Lau, especially on the island of Fulanga, may still be found a functioning culture (perhaps the only one left in Fiji) which in many respects resembles that of the early Melanesians of Viti Levu. The opportunity which it offers the researcher to gain first-hand insight into this complicated problem should not be underestimated.

LAURA THOMPSON.

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ADZES FROM THE LAU ISLANDS, FIJI.[1]

By Laura Thompson, Ph.D., Honolulu.

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During the 18th and 19th centuries the southern Lau islands, located between Fiji and Tonga, were the centre of the canoe-building industry for the whole of Fiji, and the Tonga islands as well. The valuable greenheart of India, a hardwood called *vesi* (*Intsia bijuga* [Colebr.] Ktze.) grows well on the islands of Kambara, Fulanga, Ongea, and Wangava, and it is found nowhere else in Fiji or in Tonga. Moreover other hardwoods such as *mbau* (probably *Pittosporum Brakenridgei*) also grow well on the densely-forested plateaus of the limestone islands of southern Lau. Hence in these islands is found a development of carpentry and a specialization in woodcrafts outstanding in western Polynesia, and the Lauans are known throughout the area for the superiority of the materials and the execution of their woodwork. Besides large canoes, they produce a variety of wooden bowls, gongs, headrests, digging-sticks, and houseposts. Formerly they made clubs and spears as well.

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The procuring of hardwoods was largely responsible for the interest of the Tongans in the Lau islands, especially in the 18th and 19th centuries. Tongan chiefs sent their own carpenters and assistants to southern Lau to build large, double war-canoes and often went themselves to supervise the work, which required at least two years for completion. Trade flourished between the Lauans and the Tongans, and

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[1]The following description is based on a study of 44 specimens from the southern Lau islands, Fiji, in the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu. I wish to thank Dr. Harry S. Ladd for indentification of stone specimens, Dr. A. C. Smith and Dr. Harold St. John for indentification of native plant-names, and Mr. Kenneth P. Emory for criticism of this study. This study is part of the results of a field trip to the Lau islands in 1933-34, made possible by a Bernice P. Bishop Museum fellowship.

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THE POTTERY OF THE LAU ISLANDS, FIJI.

By Laura Thompson, Ph.D.,
Honolulu.

114 This study is part of the results of a field trip to the Lau islands in 1933-34, made possible by a Bernice P. Bishop Museum fellowship.

The description is based on a study of 467 potsherds from Kambara, Wangava, Fulanga, and Mothe, and one pot from Levuka, Lakemba, in the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu.

Type

323 No earthenware pots are made in the Lau islands to-day,
177 and only a few pots are seen, but potsherds are found in
172 large numbers in old hamlet—*(tokatoka)*, and fortified village—*(koro)* sites.

323 The pottery of Lau is a relatively rough type with
531 little or no ornamentation. It is reddish ware of coarse
172 texture, tempered with sand, and often incompletely fired. The sherds show that the walls of the pots varied in thickness from .3 centimetres (sherds from Nakorombalavu, fortified cave on Wangava) to 1.7 centimetres (sherds from Ndelaimakotu hill fort on Mothe). A few sherds show incised designs on the outer surface of the wall. The designs consist of roughly-executed, incised cross-hatched lines, zigzag lines, dotted lines, and faintly incised parallel grooves (Pl. A, fig. 1). Some of the sherds show impressions of mats with check-weave like those in use to-day. The rims of the sherds are upstanding or slightly bent, either inward or outward. Fragments of necks with slightly outward-bent edge are common. As a rule, the edges of the rims are decorated with incised straight, zigzag, or hatched lines, dotted lines, or raised dots. (Pl. A, fig. 2.) Some of the sherds are perforated, but none show spouts or lugs. No traces of varnish could be detected on the surface of the sherds, although informants in Levuka, Lakemba (where pots were formerly made) say that a varnish was used on certain types of pots.

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[161] 34. The KIMBOMBO IS. are a group of 3 small, uninhabited islets, 6 miles north of the N.W. end of Vanua Mbalavu and 13 miles eastward of Naitaumba. They are surrounded by a barrier reef, 4 1/2 miles E.& W. by 3 miles N.& S. An entrance on the N.W. admits vessels into the lagoon, where good anchorage may be found.

The largest islet, the south-eastern one, is sub-crescent-shaped, about 300 by 400 yards. It is composed of exceedingly rough coral limestone and surrounded by an undercut shelf. The islet slopes up gradually from the N.& W. to a height of 190 feet, to fall sheer to the water on the east. The slopes are densely covered with the usual trees, shrubs and herbs found on rough limestone islands. There is no fresh water [312] and insect life is scarce. A number of "flying foxes" (fruit bats) and the usual land crabs were seen. There are two small rocks off the N.W. side.

The middle islet, although only 200 or 300 yards to the N.W., is composed of conglomerate and bedded tuff of volcanic origin. The bedded strata dip to the E. and N.E. at an angle of about 30°. The islet is 100 by 60 yards and 120 feet high. It slopes up gradually from the S.E. with a cliff on the N. and N.W. A sand beach borders the W. and S.E. [361] sides, with a hut and small grove of coconut palms. The rounded summit is covered with small trees, and the slopes with casuarinas.

The small islet, on the W., is a steep pinnicle of tuff and conglomerate, about 100 feet high. completely surrounded by a sand beach, with coconut palms on the south and a few small trees on the summit. A line of reef runs out to a patch of flat rocks on the N.E., and a similar reef connects the islet with two flat rocks to the south.

● 114 The observations of Agassiz (Bull.Museum Comparative Zoology, XXXIII, p.88, 1899), that the highest island is volcanic and the other two of elevated limestone, is incorrect.

[p. 79]

13 36. WAILANGILALA is a flat sand island underlain by coral limestone, a mile long and 600 yards wide at its widest ~~part~~ part. It is the most northern of the Lau Group, lying 18 miles N.N.W. from Kimbombo Islets. (S.16° 45', 179° 06' W.). The island is surrounded by a barrier reef, 2 1/2 miles wide (E.& W.) by 3 3/4 miles N.& S. Thru this there is an entrance on the west 240 yards wide which admits vessels into the lagoon, where good anchorage may be found.

The island is thickly covered with littoral plants and cocomut palms, reaching a total height of 70 feet above sea level. Toward the north there is a bare narrow isthmus, with a wooded section beyond, giving the appearance of two islands.

349 361 291 On the S.W. side is a 95 foot circular, white iron tower, with a flashing white light, visible 15 miles. The lighthouse keeper and his assistant have neat substantial homes near by. They cultivate small garden plots and dry copra from the extensive cocomut grove. Some [312] vegetables and papayas may be obtained. Rain Water is stored in a tank.

● 114 An account of a boring made on this island in 1897 is given by Alexander Agassiz in the Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Vol.XXXIII, pp.45 to 48, 1899. The island must have changed considerably in shape since that time, as it does not at present agree with maps given on pages 45 and 46. Even the position of the light-house is different.

[p.81]

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with woven mat-flooring might with few differences be found in parts of Malay to-day. The out-rigger canoe may seem fairly obvious, yet it was not used among western nations. Mariner, in his immortal book on Tonga, mentioned the veiling of women at a very ancient marriage ceremony which he witnessed there in the early days of the nineteenth century; and there are scores of little things like this that the Polynesian must have unconsciously retained despite his centuries of wandering and separation from his ancestral home. The language question is significant in itself; modes of thought and expression are very much the same, and there are more than a few root words to be found that are purely Malayan.

But enough of such theories, fascinating as they may be to the casual observer. Such things may safely be left in the hands of professional ethnologists. I have merely endeavoured to set down in this book some of the old legends and fairy stories of a people whom, with all their faults, I dearly love, and among whom I have lived and carried on my work for nearly ten years as Commissioner of their District. I take no credit for these tales, which are exactly as told to me by the natives themselves, and are selected from a big book of notes that I have made at odd times during my long residence amongst them. The apparently "biblical" language is

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114 merely a literal translation of their stories, and tends to show how closely akin they are to the Eastern minds in their ideas.

000 I once possessed a further series of notes that I took from chats with two old chiefs now dead; but, alas! a hurricane with a tidal wave swept that set of papers away, and the data are now lost for ever. Some of my predecessors, notably Sir George Le Hunte, G.C.M.G., Mr. Basil Thomson, C.B., and Mr. C. R. Swayne, C.M.G., were, I know, very interested in Lauan legends; but I fancy many of their notes met similar untimely ends; and I know that Mr. Swayne suffered a great loss of the labour of years when the official residence—in those early days simply a thatched bungalow—was burnt to the ground with all his belongings. Mr. Thomson's great study of the customs of the natives, in his well-known and classical work, "The Fijians," embraces every question possible concerning them, but in this little book I have confined myself entirely to legendary folk-lore, and to the people of the Lau Islands, whom I know best. So, then, with the hope that some of these old legends may be rescued from oblivion before it is too late, I have launched them into print, and leave their merits for the reader to decide.

T. R. St. J.

Lomaloma,
The Lau Islands.

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Bulotu lay to the north-west of Tonga (which is the true direction of Fiji), but several Tongans have told me of a rumoured ancient Bulotu at Eua Island, and the Tongans would seem to have more likely come from the east than from the "negroid stock" to the north-west.

Fison[1] gives a legend telling that the Lauan Bulotu was near Nasali, an empty reef near the Tuvana Islands, south of Ono; and how two captured gods nearly prevented the Levuka people reaching Ono, and entirely denied access to Bulotu, chanting,

> "Tuvana inland, Tuvana below
> Nasali is plainly in sight,
> Bulotu, we two are hiding it";

but there the story ended, with the escape of these two gods.

In the course of conversation with an old man of Ono Island I came across a fragment of the continuation of this legend; and on making further enquiries on other visits there I was able to collect enough to piece together the connected story, which received remarkable corroboration from an old man who left Ono many years ago as a child, but still remembers the tale as told him by his grandmother. This is the story as he told it to me, filled in as to certain minor details from the broken legends of the others.

[1] In "Tales from Old Fiji."